

SUMMARIES

Moshe Hallamish

KABBALAH AS PRAXIS

The paper deals with the linkage between the Kabbalah as a philosophical system and as a practical one. Its basic idea is that many practical customs and directives and gestures directly emanate from the theoretical Kabbalistic worldview. The large array of *Tikkunim* in the Kabbalistic literature and prayer books is a good example of this linkage.

Eliezer Ben Porat

NOTES ON CRESCAS' DISCUSSION OF THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

The aim of this essay is to shed light on the distinct shift in Rav Hasdai Crescas' discussion in *Or Hashem* regarding the Divine Attributes. The young Rav Hasdai adopted Maimonide's approach which subscribes to the view of negative attributes while the older, more mature Rav Hasdai fully accepts the theory of positive attributes. A careful look at the development of Rav Hasdai Crescas' thought reveals that the first layer in *Or Hashem* does not contain any kabbalistic elements, while the later layers do contain some kabbalistic ideas. Therefore, it is posited that the change in Rav Hasdai's approach is the result of the influence of kabbalah and its acceptance as mainstream Jewish thought.

*Avraham Segal*ON 'RENEWAL' IN THE WRITINGS OF R. YEHUDAH ARYEH LEIB
OF GUR, AND HIS SUCCESSORS

In an earlier article I examined the concept *Hakhanah* – 'preparation' as a pivotal idea in the teachings of R Yehudah Aryeh Leib of Gur. In this article I introduce the concept of *Hithadshut* – 'renewal' as a complimentary idea, working together with 'preparation'. In contrast to other Hasidic thinkers, the all-encompassing and intensive demand for 'renewal' is a theme that constantly recurs in the writings of R Yehudah Aryeh Leib of Gur and in the writings of his dynastic successors in Gur Hasidism. Following up on my hermeneutical suggestion to understand *Hakhanah* – 'preparation' as an interpretive application of the Kabbalistic concept of 'Rising Feminine Waters', I suggest here, that the concept of *Hithadshut* – 'renewal' is an interpretation of the Lurianic-Kabbalistic concept of *Zivvug* – spiritual-procreative-Union. The intensification of focus on the concept of *Hithadshut* – 'renewal' may be understood as a response of the Gur Hasidic movement to the changes being undergone by the early 20th century Jewish community in Europe exemplified by the growth of secularism and Zionism. In this context we may understand the demand of *Hithadshut* – 'renewal' as a personal and individual challenge presented to the Hasid, in facing the complex modern world.

Amir Mashiach

RABBI KOOK AND BUDDHISM

Rabbi Avraham Y. Ha-Cohen Kook's (1865-1935) writings include many volumes which deal with Jewish law; Jewish mysticism; Commentary of classical Jewish books and Poetry. He criticized other religions, especially Christianity and Idolatry. However, interestingly enough he also referred to Buddhism, and criticized it.

It is hard to believe that Rabbi Kook have read Buddhist writings. What was

the source which exposed him to this kind of thought? This article shows that Rabbi Kook was involved with European philosophers, and in our case, with Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche. The first viewed himself as Buddhist, and therefore mentioned Buddhist conception in his writings very often. He understood Buddhism as pessimism. Friedrich Nietzsche understood Buddhism as nihilism.

As result of this exposure to these two Philosophers, Rabbi Kook also describes Buddhism as pessimism and nihilism, and criticized it.

This article will point out Rabbi Kook's failure of understanding Buddhism, and will also indicate several conceptions that are in common to Rabbi Kook and Buddhism.

Smadar Gonen

RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD THE SELF AND RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD THE OTHER AND THE GAP BETWEEN THEM

The purpose of this article is to present two contradicting approaches to the meaning of responsibility. The first approach is the rational existentialistic one which is based on Sartre's theory, and the other is emotional approach embedded in Levinas' theory. Buber's approach seems to mediate between these two theories.

The term "Responsibility" contains the word response, that is to say that responsibility is measured on one hand by the outcome of the response and on the other hand a responsibility represents a positive response towards others. The first meaning of responsibility is concentrated on the liberty of choosing options, the ability of results forecasting and the ability to prevent the forecasted results. In short, the responsibility embedded in the role which we choose in life. The second meaning of responsibility is morally and emotionally taking care of others. This element of responsibility does not involve choosing or awareness.

Elisabeth Goldwyn

RELIGION AND MORAL IN EMMANUEL LEVINAS'
JEWISH PHILOSOPHY

Religion is considered as referring to a person's relationship with God or the transcendental, while moral refers to inter-human relationships. These notions are often thought as indifferent or even conflicting with each other. But there are many Biblical and Rabbinic texts who show an essential and even an inter dependence between them.

Emmanuel Levinas' approach to the relationship between religion and moral continues this perspective of inter dependence between them. In this article I focus on his "Jewish" texts: I analyze part of his Talmudic Lecture 'Towards the Other' (*Nine Talmudic Readings*) and the way he defines the notion of sanctity, which is usually considered as essentially religious. For Levinas, thinking of moral that has no transcendental dimension is phenomenologically wrong and is weak in its capacity to influence actual behaviour in the world. On the other hand, and as the fundamental essence of religion is to shape ethical relationships between people, religion actions that ignore their human ramifications is not only dangerous, as they might cause damage to other people, but are also religiously wrong.

I think that renewing this traditional view of inter dependence between moral and religion such as Levinas does might have important implications on contemporary Israeli life.